
APPENDIX A: INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM PROTOCOL

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

.01 This establishes a protocol for the NMSP International Program and describes the standards, the roles and responsibilities necessary to conduct international activities.

SECTION 2. POLICY

.01 The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) requires the NMSP to “cooperate with global programs encouraging conservation of marine resources” (NMSA section 301(b)(9)).

.02 The NMSP works to “build and strengthen the nation-wide system of marine sanctuaries, maintain and enhance the role of the NMSP’s system in larger marine protected area networks, and help provide both national and international leadership for marine protected area management and marine resource stewardship” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 2).

.02.1 The NMSP will “develop an ecosystem-based context in which sanctuaries exist to facilitate identification of potential new sites, in coordination, to the most practical extent, with community, regional, national, and international efforts” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 2, Objective 1).

.02.2 The NMSP will “initiate, coordinate and participate in ecosystem-based and network initiatives and projects at the regional, national, and international levels” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 2, Objective 2).

.02.3 The NMSP will “develop and maintain interagency partnerships and collaborations, particularly with other national and international protected area and resource managers” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 2, Objective 3).

.03 The NMSP works “with the international community to strengthen global protection of marine resources, investigate and employ appropriate new management approaches, and disseminate NMSP experience and techniques” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 6).

.03.1 The NMSP will “develop multilateral program relationships to interact with, share knowledge and experience with, and learn from international partners to improve the NMSP’s management capacity, and bring new experiences to marine protected area management in the U.S.” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 6, Objective 1).

.03.2 The NMSP will “investigate the use of international legal conventions and other instruments to help protect sanctuary resources, including those that are transboundary or shared” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 6, Objective 2).

03.3 The NMSP will “cooperate to the extent possible with global research initiatives in order to improve the overall understanding of the ocean” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 6, Objective 3).

03.4 The NMSP will “make education and awareness programs accessible through international efforts to increase the global population’s awareness of ocean issues” (NMSP Strategic Plan, Goal 6, Objective 4).

.04 NMSP’s Conservation Policy and Planning Division will provide overall support and coordination on international program activities and work in close cooperation with the International Task Force, the sites and the regions in accordance with NMSP and NOS/NOAA policy.

.05 The International Task Force will provide overall program guidance on international program activities and will advise the International Coordinator.

SECTION 3. SCOPE

This protocol applies to all NMSP international program activities.

SECTION 4. DEFINITIONS

.01 International Action Plan

The International Action Plan is the implementation plan for the NMSP International Program. It is framed around NMSP Strategic Plan Goals 6 and 2 and their objectives. It describes all the program elements of the International Program.

.02 International Activities

Any project involving NMSP staff and/or funding that contains an international component.

.03 International Coordinator

The Chief of the NMSP Conservation, Policy, and Planning Division serves as International Coordinator.

.04 International Mini-Grant Program

The International Mini-Grant Program is used to help develop projects that contribute to the attainment of NMSP

goals and objectives. The program is dependent on annual funding allocations. The International Task Force will make funding recommendations to the International Coordinator and the NMSP Director for evaluation.

.05 International Studies and Collaborative Management Program (ISCMP)

ISCMP identifies detail opportunities, both those originated by the NMSP and those administrated by others (e.g., Embassy Science Fellowships), for the staff of the NMSP. This program builds professional capacity. Dependent on annual funding priorities, ISCMP contributes to the NMSP Strategic Goal 6 and its objectives.

.06 International Task Force

The International Task Force is a coordination and consultation body that has broad membership from each region and each headquarters division.

The primary role of the International Task Force will be to review and evaluate ongoing and proposed international activities relevant to the NMSP strategic goals and objectives and annual program priorities, and provide advice to the International Coordinator. This team will help improve integration and alignment of existing projects as well as help allocate funds toward those projects with the highest priority. The task force will set international priorities for international activities and serve as a filter point through which requests for funding and activities are funneled. Decisions will be made to maximize connectivity to larger program goals and plans.

Ideally, the Task Force will consist of the International Coordinator, four regional representatives, a representative from the Director's Office, and one representative from each of the four program divisions (National Programs, Communications, Conservation Policy and Planning, and Maritime Heritage), and one member from the NOS International Program Office.

The task force will meet at least quarterly by phone, in conjunction with quarterly reporting cycles so that funds allocation and activity reporting schedules are synchronized.

07. Sister Sanctuary Program

The Sister Sanctuary Program is a NMSP program that involves are formal agreements between individual national marine sanctuaries and marine protected areas in other countries to share experiences and expertise. Sister sanctuary status provides the opportunity for sanctuary field and headquarters staff to interact with leadership and staff at marine protected areas around the world on a formal basis. Opportunities for interaction include: information sharing through electronic communication, site visits, training and personnel exchanges.

SECTION 5. STANDARDS

.01 NMSP's international program activities will exhibit standards of high quality. International activities will adhere to NOAA/NMSP strategic goals and objectives.

SECTION 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

.01 The NMSP International Coordinator

- a. Serves as the primary point of contact for international activities and inquiries at the national level for NMSP;
- b. Serves as the NMSP point of contact for the NOS International Program Office (IPO), and NOAA International Affairs (IA);
- c. Serves as point of contact, or delegating that duty, on appropriate international projects as requested by outside agencies;
- d. Communicates international activities on a routine basis to NMSP personnel through established mechanisms;
- e. Briefs/prepares staff newly assigned to international projects;
- f. Makes and maintains contact with international activities staff at other Federal programs;
- g. Represents the NMSP at international conferences and meetings, as appropriate;
- h. Establishes and coordinates an International Task Force of site, regional, and headquarters staff; and
- i. Ensures that international protocols are followed.

.02 The NMSP International Task Force

- a. Reviews, evaluates, and makes recommendations to the International Coordinator and NMSP Director on the International Mini-Grants Program;
- b. Reviews international activities in annual operating plans;
- c. Facilitates getting resources (including supplemental NPP funds, and access to other national and international resources) to support international projects at sites and regions;
- d. Identifies new opportunities and projects for international involvement for the NMSP, in collaboration with NOS IPO and NOAA IA;
- e. Prepares an biannual accomplishments report for international activities, and contributes to the NOS international accomplishments report;
- f. Provides assistance in developing and reporting on NMSP international performance measures to reflect international program efforts; and

g. Assists sites and HQ staff when international visitors travel to sites.

.03 The NMSP Conservation Policy and Planning Division

- a. Develops and manages the overall NMSP international project inventory and schedule;
- b. Develops and periodically updates program-wide international program guidelines;
- c. Facilitates periodic workshops to discuss lessons learned, ways to make processes more efficient, and as necessary update procedures and protocols;
- d. Facilitates and conducts training for national, regional or site staff working on international projects. Training topics may include: designing public multi-stakeholder processes, conflict management, facilitation, and communications; and capacity building.
- e. Facilitates the NOAA International Affairs notification and coordination process, including helping organize appropriate briefings with NOAA leadership;
- f. Keeps NMSP/NOS/NOAA leadership informed about all international program activities; and
- g. Hosts international visitors by escorting delegations, coordinating schedules, setting up meetings, and other tasks as necessary, including managing compliance with NOAA Administrative Orders on international visitors, guests and deemed exports.

.04 The NMSP Regions and Divisions

- a. Provide input into the scheduling of international program activities in the region as necessary to facilitate an international visit;
- b. Coordinate with regional superintendents to assess whether additional regional and/or national assets are needed;
- c. Ensure that the regional and division representative to the International Task Force is fully apprised of international activities in the region or division;
- d. Ensure that staff adheres to international travel guidelines and other international guidance, including managing compliance with NOAA Administrative Orders on international visitors, guests and deemed exports;
- e. Notify the International Coordinator of new international activities in the region or division;
- f. Manage individual projects, including those funded under the International Mini-Grant Program;
- g. Identify international project managers and/or primary point of contact for international projects; and
- h. Host international visitors by escorting delegations, coordinating schedules, setting up meetings, and other tasks as necessary.

.05 The Sanctuaries

- a. Provide input into the scheduling of international program activities at the site;
- b. Coordinate with site and regional superintendents to assess whether additional regional and/or national assets are needed;
- c. Ensure that the regional and division representative to the International Task Force is fully apprised of international activities in the region or division;
- d. Ensure that staff adheres to international travel guidelines and other international guidance, including managing compliance with NOAA Administrative Orders on international visitors, guests and deemed exports;
- e. Notify the International Coordinator of new international activities in the site;
- f. Manage individual projects, including those funded under the International Mini-Grant Program;
- g. Identify international project managers and/or primary point of contact for international projects; and
- g. Host international visitors by escorting delegations, coordinating schedules, setting up meetings, and other tasks as necessary.

.06 The NMSP Staff travelers:

- a. Follow the NMSP International Travel Guidelines (Appendix E); and
- b. Follow all other relevant travel protocols or other guidance from NOS and NOAA.

SECTION 7. AUTHORITIES

.01 National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. § 1440 (c) et seq.)
